

2016 First Step Programs

During this Holy Year, the Jubilee of Mercy, we are called to renew our relationship with God and the Church. Attempting to pick up the pieces of one's life after the tragedy of divorce is an area that can impact a person's relationship with God and the Church. One of the significant issues that a person faces is their place in the Church. Does the Church still care about me even though I am divorced? Am I allowed to go to Mass? Can I receive Communion? How can the Church help me heal? If I decide to marry again, what do I have to do? The Tribunal of the Diocese of Cleveland, especially during this Jubilee of Mercy, offers its First Step Program in order to help individuals deal with these questions in order to renew and/or strengthen their relationship with God and the Church. **This program is offered to help anyone learn more about Catholic teaching regarding marriage, divorce, and remarriage.** Representatives from the Ministry to the Divorced Office of the Department for Marriage and Family Ministry will also be present to explain the resources they offer to the divorced. Everyone is welcome to deepen knowledge of the Church's teaching on marriage, learn about the Church's ministry to the divorced/separated in the Diocese, hear about the annulment process and how to submit a case, and discover a path to healing after divorce in order to strengthen and/or renew a relationship with God and the Church. In any endeavor, taking the "first step" is always the most difficult. The First Step Program helps individuals to navigate the path of healing and closure. **The 2016 general meetings schedule is: Tuesday, March 8 at St. Peter Parish, Lorain, at 7pm; Thursday, May 19 at St. Noel Parish, Willoughby Hills, at 7pm; Tuesday, September 13 at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Cuyahoga Falls, at 7pm; Tuesday, October 18 at St. Ambrose Parish, Brunswick, at 7pm. Note that the Diocese of Cleveland no longer requires any fees for this process.** For testimonials about the program from past participants and for more information visit www.dioceseofcleveland.org/tribunal or call the Tribunal at 216-696-6525/800-869-6525 x4000.

Gay and Lesbian Family Ministry

The Saint John Vianney Parish Support Group for Families and Friends of Gay and Lesbian Catholics and the Cleveland Diocesan Gay and Lesbian Family Ministry will co-sponsor a presentation by Eve Tushnet on Saturday, February 6, 2016, at 10am, at the Saint John Vianney Father Kline Social Center, (7575 Bellflower Rd., Mentor, OH). Eve Tushnet is the author of a recently released book entitled *Gay and Catholic: Accepting My Sexuality, Finding Community, Living My Faith*. The presentation is open to all. **Eve will share some of her experiences of the challenges and joys of living as a same-sex attracted individual who is deeply attached to her Catholic faith. She will also share some practical tips for helping same-sex attracted individuals, their friends and family.**

Please check the vestibule for more information on upcoming events, registration forms, prayer cards, and notices.

Help The Needy in Northeast Ohio

The Cleveland Furniture Bank provides basic home furnishings to people in need who are trying to rebuild their lives. They are in need of couches, chairs, kitchen tables and dressers to provide to over 3000 people referred to them each year. **If you are downsizing, remodeling, redecorating or just have furniture items you no longer need, call 216-459-2265 x101 or visit www.clevelandfurniturebank.org/donate to schedule a pickup of your furniture.** If you have other items such as clothing, household goods, pots and pans, dishes, etc. they will pick those up at the same time. **Mention Mother of Sorrows Parish and they will waive the pickup fee.**

Keeping Warm

The Ozanam Center, run by the St. Vincent DePaul Society, is still in need of coats for the needy. **If you, or someone you know, has a coat they would like to donate (especially men's and children's), please bring it to Mother of Sorrows Parish and your donation will be dropped off at the Ozanam Center.** If you have more than one we would be happy to help you bring them in. **Thank you in advance for your generosity.**

Have An Old Car?

Wondering what to do with that old car? Help a neighbor in need by donating it to the St. Vincent de Paul Society. **Your used car can become food, medicine and rent for the poor in our community.** And when you donate your late model car, truck or boat to SVDP Cleveland, not only will you receive a tax deduction to the fullest extent of the law, you will be free from the troubles of insuring, licensing, repairing and selling your vehicle. We will even provide free towing within 24 hours. **To donate, please call 800-322-8284 or visit www.svdpusa.com.**

Engaged Encounter

Catholic Engaged Encounter is a comprehensive weekend of marriage preparation held three times a year at the St. Leonard Retreat Center, 4076 Case Rd., Avon, OH 44011. Call Alex and Lily Fuentes at 216-849-3769 with any questions. **Cost is \$185 per couple.** Dates for 2016 are February 12-14, May 20-22 and October 14-16, 2016. Visit www.clevelandencounter.com to register or for additional information!

Worldwide Marriage Encounter

Married Couples - Do you know that more than 1,500,000 couples in over 92 countries have experienced a Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend? They found something worth passing on. **The next weekend is scheduled for February 12-14, 2016 at the Clarion Inn & Conference Center, Hudson, OH.** For more info, call 330-305-9963 or visit www.greatmarriagesohio.org.

The Baptism of the Lord Sunday Bulletin Announcements for January 10, 2016

Opportunity for Service

Response 2016, the most comprehensive guide of faith-based service opportunities is now available. Volunteers serve full-time for periods of one week to one year or more across the United States and in more than 100 countries worldwide. Summer and school break opportunities are also available. **Our volunteers are from all walks of life.** Contact Catholic Volunteer Network to receive your free copy/copies of Response 2016 at **800-543-5046** or info@catholicvolunteernetwork.org. You can also visit www.catholicvolunteernetwork.org.

Save The Date

On **February 9 (Fat Tuesday) at 6:30pm, Philip Keller**, better known as radio personality "Trapper Jack," will deliver a **special pre-Lenten talk**. Come listen as he reflects on his journey of faith as a legally blind man whose blindness surprisingly led him back to the Catholic Church. He will also share his insights on the power of the Holy Rosary. Held at the **Knights of Columbus #3410 Hall at 2055 Glenmount Ave., Akron, OH 44319**. Sponsored by the Akron Serra Club and the South Akron Knights of Columbus.

Volunteer Opportunity

Touch a life... Become a Hospice Volunteer. Hospice is a philosophy of care, not a place. We care for our patients wherever they call home. As a vital part of our team volunteers come from all walks of life, and have a variety of skills, talents and abilities. Opportunities to serve are diverse: visit patients and families to provide companionship, socialization, and comfort, help with legacy work, transportation, light housework, meal preparation, run errands, make phone calls, help with clerical work, attend health fairs, make a presentation. Volunteers with specialized professional qualifications and training are also needed: attorneys, licensed hair dressers, Massotherapists, pet therapy dogs and their handlers. Volunteer education is held frequently throughout northern Ohio. Teen and most volunteers not having contact with patients take 4 hours of training while patient care volunteers have 16 hours. **Visit us at www.hospicewr.org for more information or call us 800-707-8922 x6881.**

Get Catholic News Emailed to You!

The official magazine of the Diocese of Cleveland, Northeast Ohio Catholic, is a great way to stay connected to timely news and information from the Vatican and our Catholic community. To sign up for our weekly diocesan eNewsletter, visit www.dioceseofcleveland.org. If you haven't been receiving Northeast Ohio Catholic magazine by mail and would like to, contact Deacon Jim Armstrong, Executive Director for Communications at 216-696-6525 x3290 or jarmstrong@dioceseofcleveland.org.

Bereavement Support

A six-week Bereavement Support Series will begin Tuesday, February 2 from 7-9pm at Our Lady of Victory Parish Center, 73 North Ave., Tallmadge. The evenings will provide insight, understanding and support to those who mourn the loss of a loved one. Many common issues surrounding grief and healing will be discussed, grounded in faith and surrounded by those who care and understand. For more information or to register, call 330-633-3672.

NFP

Keep it PURE...Your Body...your water...your Marriage...Try Natural Family Planning...It works. **All are invited to the next "Why Natural Family Planning?" session.** During this 45 minute session you will learn the latest 2015 data regarding the health risks of hormonal contraception, benefits and myths of NFP (this is not the rhythm method), the results of a contraceptive mentality since the 1960's and why the Catholic Church promotes this as the only means of family planning that is safe, healthy, and an effective means of family planning which strengthens marriages and family. The most common reaction mentioned after this session is "Why have we never heard this before?" This introductory class is open to anyone, young and not so young, and will help you make an informed decision regarding the benefits of NFP. **7pm, Holy Family, Stow, Lower Church Hall Rm 1: Monday, Feb 1, 2016. Contact Leo and Toni Doty, with any questions (akdoty@kent.edu or 330-689-0632).**

Listening, Encouraging, & Assisting Families

Do you have families in your parish, who, because of the incarceration of a loved one, experience isolation, shame, guilt, and an overwhelming sense of being alone? The LEAF Ministry has been formed to be of support to these families. Groups meet monthly offering an opportunity to those who come to listen and share community, network and learn from others who understand their situation, challenges, fears and emotions. All are welcome to participate irrespective of faith affiliation. For more info and to verify schedules, call 216-696-6525 x3500 or 800-869-6525 x3500, email info@leafministry.org, or visit www.leafministry.org. No pre-registration is necessary.

Visitation of Mary Invites You to Join 200 Club!

You are invited to join the **Visitation of Mary Parish (formerly Annunciation) 200 Club** for 2016 for only **\$52 per person for the year!** Every month for 8 months (February through September), two lucky people will win \$100 each. PLUS in March and again in September, there will be an additional drawing for \$500! **Drawings are on the 3rd Friday of every month at the Visitation of Mary rectory. The first drawing will be February 19.** Location for the special \$500 drawings will be announced. **Hurry! Numbers are starting to sell! For more info or to sign up, contact Jerry at 330-592-4155 or 330-535-4141 x12.**

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